

## S. CON. RES. 70

Whereas Russian Federation President Putin has stated that “modern Russia’s greatest achievement is the democratic process (and) the achievements of our civil society”;

Whereas the unobstructed establishment and free and autonomous operations and activities of nongovernmental organizations and a robust civil society free from excessive government control are central and indispensable elements of a democratic society;

Whereas the free and autonomous operations of nongovernmental organizations in any society necessarily encompass activities, including political activities, that may be contrary to government policies;

Whereas domestic, international, and foreign nongovernmental organizations are crucial in assisting the Russian Federation and the Russian people in tackling the many challenges they face, including in such areas as education, infectious diseases, and the establishment of a flourishing democracy;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has proposed legislation that would have the effect of severely restricting the establishment, operations, and activities of domestic, international, and foreign nongovernmental organizations in the Russian Federation, including erecting unprecedented barriers to foreign assistance;

Whereas the State Duma of the Russian Federation is considering the first draft of such legislation;

Whereas the restrictions in the first draft of this legislation would impose disabling restraints on the establishment, operations, and activities of nongovernmental organizations and on civil society throughout the Russian Federation, regardless of the stated intent of the Government of the Russian Federation;

Whereas the stated concerns of the Government of the Russian Federation regarding the use of nongovernmental organizations by foreign interests and intelligence agencies to undermine the Government of the Russian Federation and the security of the Russian Federation as a whole can be fully addressed without imposing disabling restraints on nongovernmental organizations and on civil society;

Whereas there is active debate underway in the Russian Federation over concerns regarding such restrictions on nongovernmental organizations;

Whereas the State Duma and the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly play a central role in the system of checks and balances that are prerequisites for a democracy;

Whereas the first draft of the proposed legislation has already passed its first reading in the State Duma;

Whereas President Putin has indicated his desire for changes in the first draft that would “correspond more closely to the principles according to which civil society functions”;

Whereas Russia’s destiny and the interests of her people lie in her assumption of her rightful place as a full and equal member of the international community of democracies: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—*

(1) urges the Government of the Russian Federation to withdraw the first draft of the proposed legislation that would have the effect of severely restricting the establishment, operations, and activities of domestic, international, and foreign nongovernmental organizations in the Russian Federation, or to modify the proposed legislation to entirely remove these restrictions; and

(2) in the event that the first draft of the proposed legislation is not withdrawn, urges

the State Duma and the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly to modify the legislation to ensure the unobstructed establishment and free and autonomous operations and activities of such nongovernmental organizations in accordance with the practices universally adopted by democracies, including the provisions regarding foreign assistance.

# SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 71—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT STATES SHOULD REQUIRE CANDIDATES FOR DRIVER’S LICENSES TO DEMONSTRATE AN ABILITY TO EXERCISE GREATLY INCREASED CAUTION WHEN DRIVING IN THE PROXIMITY OF A POTENTIALLY VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUAL

Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mr. INOUE, and Mr. SALAZAR) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

## S. CON. RES. 71

Whereas many people in the United States who are blind or otherwise visually impaired have the ability to travel throughout their communities without assistance;

Whereas visually impaired individuals encounter hazards that a pedestrian with average vision could easily avoid, many of which involve crossing streets and roadways;

Whereas the white cane and guide dog should be generally recognized as aids to mobility for visually impaired individuals;

Whereas many States do not require candidates for driver’s licenses to associate the use of the white cane or guide dog with potentially visually impaired individuals; and

Whereas visually impaired individuals have had their white canes and guide dogs run over by motor vehicles, have been struck by the side view mirrors of motor vehicles, and have suffered serious personal injury and death as the result of being hit by motor vehicles: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that each State should require any candidate for a driver’s license in such State to demonstrate, as a condition of obtaining a driver’s license, an ability to associate the use of the white cane and guide dog with visually impaired individuals and to exercise greatly increased caution when driving in proximity to a potentially visually impaired individual.*

## AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2677. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. STEVENS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1390, to reauthorize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, and for other purposes.

SA 2678. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. STEVENS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1390, supra.

SA 2679. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. AKAKA) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution H. Con. Res. 218, recognizing the centennial of sustained immigration from the Philippines to the United States and acknowledging the contributions of our Filipino-American community to our country over the last century.

## TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2677. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. STEVENS) proposed an amendment to

the bill S. 1390, to reauthorize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 3, beginning in line 24, strike “impacts or other physical damage to coral reefs, including” and insert “impacts, derelict fishing gear, vessel anchors and anchor chains, or”.

SA 2678. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. STEVENS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1390, to reauthorize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 4, strike lines 14 through 19, and insert the following:

“(2) leverage resources of other agencies.”.

SA 2679. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. AKAKA) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution H. Con. Res. 218, recognizing the centennial of sustained immigration from the Philippines to the United States and acknowledging the contributions of our Filipino-American community to our country over the last century; as follows:

Beginning in page 4, line 8, strike “requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on” and insert “urges”.

## AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

### COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Thursday, December 15, 2005, at 10 a.m. on pending committee business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet on Thursday, December 15, 2005, at 10 a.m., for a hearing titled, “Hurricane Katrina: Who’s In Charge of the New Orleans Levees?”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to hold an off-the-floor markup during the session on Thursday, December 15, 2005, to consider the nominations of George W. Foresman to be Under Secretary for Preparedness, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and Mary M. Rose to be Member, Merit Systems Protection Board.

## Agenda

### Nominations

(1) George W. Foresman to be Under Secretary for Preparedness, U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

(2) Mary M. Rose to be Member, Merit Systems Protection Board.